



CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, 2nd Fl., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

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E-mail: histcomm@cambridgema.gov URL: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/Historic>

William B. King, *Chair*, Bruce A. Irving, *Vice Chair*, Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director*
M. Wyllis Bibbins, Robert G. Crocker, Chandra Harrington, Frank Shirley, Jo M. Solet, *Members*
Shary Page Berg, Joseph V. Ferrara, Susannah Barton Tobin, *Alternates*

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

From: Charles M. Sullivan, Executive Director *cms*

Date: September 14, 2009

Re: Wind Turbine Zoning Proposal

I am hereby transmitting correspondence from William B. King, Chair of the Historical Commission, relative to the wind turbine zoning proposal currently before the Council. The City Council had requested that the Historical Commission review the proposal and forward any comments back to the Council. The Historical Commission reviewed the proposal at its meeting last Thursday.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

cc: Beth Rubenstein, CDD

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OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



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September 14, 2009

Ordinance Committee
Cambridge City Council
City Hall

Dear Councilors,

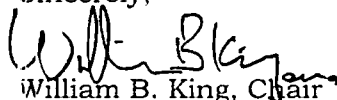
By letter dated August 10, 2009 from Beth Rubenstein, the Historical Commission was requested to review and comment upon the proposed Wind Turbine Zoning provision that is before the Council. The proposal is contained in April 14, 2009 memorandum from Ms. Rubenstein to the City Manager.

At our meeting on September 10, the Commission discussed the proposal at some length. The Commission voted both (i) its approval that the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance would not limit or "trump" the jurisdiction of the Commission as to any alteration to any property with respect to which it has review authority under other provisions of the City's ordinances and Massachusetts Laws, and (ii) its opinion that it is poor public policy to permit, even in the limited circumstances described in proposed Section 11.22, an up to 40 foot "as-of-right" addition to the height of an existing building, without regard to how high that building may be.

During the discussion, several members of the Commission also expressed concern that the City's existing Noise Ordinance is not adequate to deal with the technical and enforcement issues involved with wind turbines. The Commission asked that, without specifically endorsing its findings or conclusions, you be provided with a copy of the enclosed study "Perception and environmental impact of wind turbine noise" that was presented at the August 23-29 Inter-noise 2009 Conference in Ottawa.

Two Commission members also noted potential problems in the "time limit" language of Subsection 11.22.2.1: potential ambiguity in the use of the words "installation" and "operation" (do the various 2-year limits apply to installation alone, installation and operation, or operation alone?); and does the balance of a 2-year period survive the discovery of a nuisance or hazard?

Sincerely,


William B. King, Chair

cc. Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development